DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 339 774 UD 028 441

AUTHOR Simpson, Patricia
TITLE Living in Poverty: Coping on the Welfare Grant.
SPONS AGENCY Community Service Society of New York, N.Y.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-88156-108-8
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 160p.
AVAILABLE FROM Office of Information, Community Service Society, 105 East 22nd Street, New York, NY 10010 ($15.00).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS At Risk Persons; Children; *Client Characteristics (Human Services); *Coping; Decision Making; Economically Disadvantaged; Federal Programs; Housing Needs; *Mothers; *Poverty; Poverty Programs; Public Policy; *Social Environment; Social Problems; Urban Problems; *Welfare Services
IDENTIFIERS Aid to Families with Dependent Children; *New York (New York)

ABSTRACT

This monograph used a qualitative orientation to examine the inadequacy of public assistance income in New York City as it affects material conditions among welfare families, their attempts to mitigate the negative consequences of income inadequacy through coping strategies, and the broader social environment within poor communities. The data consisted of analysis of 100 hours of scripted interviews with 36 female parents in households where Aid to Families with Dependant Children was the primary income source. Findings include the following: (1) families transfer funds from housing into other needs with a consequent negative effect on housing quality; (2) respondents pool food stamps with other families and many buy food on credit; (3) two-thirds of the respondents cannot keep growing children appropriately dressed for school; (4) within limits posed by their socioeconomic status, families maximize their resources through a rational decision-making process; and (5) many experience social isolation. The paper offers eight policy recommendations based on the study's findings. Statistical data are provided in 15 tables. Included are 37 footnotes and 6 appendices containing interview forms, tables showing selected demographic characteristics of interviewees, data on a comparison study sample, data concerning the incidence of reliance on coping strategies (food category), a survey of children's discount clothing stores, and a summary of survey results of layaway policies of selected stores. (JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****